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AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION OF FERDINAND J. DREER.

BY PROFESSOR GREGORY B. KEEN.

[Read at the Annual Meeting of the Historical Society held May 5, 1890.]

The collection of autographs of Mr. Ferdinand J. Dreer, recently presented to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, was begun by him more than forty years ago, and comprises upward of nine thousand letters written by persons of various nationalities and almost every pursuit in life. The nucleus of these treasures consisted of two letters presented to Mr. Dreer, one written by the Norwegian violinist, Ole Bull, the other by the American author, Lydia Maria Child.

The first purchased autograph letter was written by George Washington. It proved not to be the writing of the illustrious "father of his country," but that of his nephew of the same name, who resided at Mount Vernon while Washington was President. This was bought in 1848, and from that period Mr. Dreer collected autographs of distinguished persons with continually increasing assiduity and success. In 1850 appeared Lossing's "Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution," presenting more than eleven hundred pictorial illustrations of persons and events associated with that subject, among which were a great number of fac-similes of signatures of persons who took part in the American war for independence. These, Mr. Dreer informs us, inspired him with an irresistible desire to possess full letters written and signed by the same hands, and gave a special direction to his acquisitions at that time.

In 1851, Mr. Dreer bought the valuable collection of autographs made by Robert Gilmor, of Baltimore. He continued to buy only through local dealers in such commodi-

ties, and by chance opportunities, until about 1870, when he began to purchase foreign autographs of dealers in London, Paris, and Berlin, from whom he regularly received packages of letters, with the privilege of making his selection from them, and returning what he did not wish to keep. He also bought many letters at public sales in England, France, Germany, and the United States.

The great size and variety of the collection thus formed precludes the possibility of describing it satisfactorily in a few words. Suffice it to say, it contains autographs of—

Popes.—Leo X., XI., and XIII., Innocent XI., Clement XIII. and XIV., Gregory XVI., and Pius IV., VIII., and IX.

Emperors of Germany.—Charles V. and many subsequent emperors, and the Empress Maria Theresa.

Emperors of Austria.—Francis I. and later emperors.

Czars of Russia.—Alexander I. and others, and the Empress Catherine II.

Kings of Prussia.—Frederick I., II., and III., Frederick William I., II., and III., and William I. and the late Frederick, Emperors of Germany.

Kings of England.—Henry VII. and VIII., and all sovereigns from Queen Elizabeth to Queen Victoria, besides Oliver Cromwell. Also Mary, Queen of Scots.

Kings of France.—Francis I. and nearly all subsequent monarchs, including Catherine de Médicis, Henry IV. and Louis XIV., and the Emperors Napoleon I. and III.

Kings of Spain.—Philip II. and several later.

Other Sovereigns.—Gustavus Adolphus and Christina, King and Queen of Sweden. Christian IV., King of Denmark. William of Orange, founder of the Dutch Republic. Lorenzo de' Medici, the Magnificent, Prince of Florence. Cosimo II. de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany. Augustus I., King of Poland. Leopold I. and II., Kings of Belgium. Dom Pedro I. and II., Emperors of Brazil. René of Anjou.

Clergy, Catholic.—St. Charles Borromeo, St. Vincent de Paul; Cardinals Alberoni, Antonelli, Caprara, Dubois, Fleury, Manning, Mazarin, Newman, De Retz, Wiseman,

Ximenes; Bossuet, Dupanloup, Fénélon, Holstenius, Huet, Lacordaire, Massillon, Richelieu.

Clergy, Protestant.—Arminius, Atterbury, Baxter, Beza, Bull, Burnet, Butler, Calvin, Chalmers, Eber, Farel, Fleetwood, Hengstenberg, Irving, Laud, Lightfoot, Lowth, Luther, Melancthon, Mant, Mosheim, Neander, Paley, Ridley, Robertson, Sparheim, Strauss, Summerfield, Spener, Spurgeon, Stanley, Tholuck, Taylor, Tillotson, Wake, Warburton, Watts, Wesley, Whately, Whitefield, Whewell, Zinzendorf.

Philosophers.—Bacon, Bayle, Beccaria, Bentham, Berkeley, Buckle, Cousin, Des Cartes, Diderot, Emerson, Fichte, De Gerando, Grotius, Helvetius, Jacobi, Kane, Leibnitz, Locke, Mill, Rousseau, Rumford, St.-Simon, Schelling, Spencer, Stewart, Stilling, Schopenhauer, Tyndall, Voltaire, Wolff, Zimmerman.

Statesmen.—Beaconsfield, Bolingbroke, Bright, Brougham, Brühl, Buckingham, Burleigh, Burke, Cairns, Calhoun, Castelar, Cavour, Chateaubriand, Chatham, Clay, Cobden, Colbert, Constant, Cosimo de' Medici, Danton, Derby, Dickinson, Essex, Everett, Fox, Franklin, Gambetta, Gladstone, Godoy, Gortchakoff, Grattan, Grenville, Duc de Guise, (Alexander) Hamilton, (Warren) Hastings, (Patrick) Henry, (John) Jay, Kossuth, Machiavelli, Marat, Metternich, Moñino, Montalembert, Necker, North, O'Connell, Palmerston, Peel, Pitt, Randolph, Robespierre, Rockingham, Serrano, Seward, Strafford, Strozzi, Sydney, Talleyrand, Temple, Thiers, De Tocqueville, Turgot, (Sir Henry) Vane, Walpole, Webster, Wellesley, Wirt, Wotton, Wyndham.

Political Economists.—Carey, Colwell, Filangieri, Malthus, (Adam) Smith.

Lawyers and Jurists.—D'Aguesseau, Blackstone, Coke, Curran, Ellenborough, Erskine, Feuerbach, Kent, Kenyon, Malesherbes, Marshall, Puffendorf, Ryder, Story, Taney, Wheaton.

Soldiers.—Blücher, Boulanger, Broglie, Condé, Egmond, Eugene, Fabert, Fairfax, Grant, Grouchy, Don John of Austria, Jomini, Kleber, Lee, MacMahon, Marlborough,

Masséna, Meade, von Moltke, Montmorency, Montrose, (Sir John) Moore, Murat, Napoleon, Nassau, Ney, Piccolomini, Poniatowski, Prim, Pulaski, Putnam, Rochambeau, Prince Rupert, Prince de Soubise, Sully, Marshal Saxe, Schwarzenberg, Scott, Sheridan, Sherman, Soult, Taylor, Thomas, Todleben, Trochu, Turenne, Vauban, Vioménil, Wellington, Wolseley.

Sailors.—Barry, Dale, Decatur, De Witt, Drake, Farragut, Gravina, Hawke, (John Paul) Jones, Napier, Nelson, Perry, Rodney, Ruyter, Warren.

Physicians.—Agnew, Aikin, Arbuthnot, Baillie, Boerhaave, Brodie, Cooper, Desgenettes, Hahnemann, Howe, Hunter, Jenner, Orfila, Pelletan, Physick, Radcliffe, Rush, Scarpa, Sloane, Spurzheim, Van Swieten.

Naturalists.—Agassiz, Audubon, Blumenbach, Brewster, Cuvier, Dana, Darwin, Evelyn, Forster, Haller, Humboldt, Huxley, Leidy, Mesmer, Monboddo, Oersted, Owen, Tyndall, Wilson.

Botanists.—Balfour, Bartram, Candolle, Durand, Gray, Greville, Torrey.

Chemists.—Berzelius, Brogniart, Cavendish, Chevreul, Dalton, Davy, Faraday, Gay-Lussac, Hare, Klaproth, Liebig, Pasteur, Priestley.

Mathematicians.—D'Alembert, Babbage, Euler, Legendre, L'Hospital, Manfredi, Maupertius, Playfair.

Astronomers.—Amici, Arago, Encke, Galileo, Halley, (Sir W. R.) Hamilton, the Herschels, Newton, Rittenhouse, Rosse, Le Verrier, Zach.

Geologists.—Hutton, Lyell, Miller, Murchison, Verneuil, Werner.

Inventors and Engineers.—Daguerre, Edison, Ericsson, Evans, Fitch, Fulton, Godfrey, Goodyear, De Lesseps, Montgolfier, Morse, Rennell, Rennie, Rittenhouse, Rumford, Stanhope, Stephenson, Telford, Watt, Wedgwood, Whitney.

Travellers and Explorers.—Baker, Burton, Du Chaillu, Fremont, Greely, Kane, Livingstone, Malte-Brun, Nordenskjold, La Pérouse, Speke, Stanley, Volney.

Historians.—Alison, Bancroft, Boswell (the biographer of Johnson), Botta, Camden, Carlyle, Clarendon, Freeman, Froude, Gervinus, Gibbon, Grote, Guizot, Hallam, Heeren, Hume, Irving, Lingard, Macaulay, Motley, Muratori, Niebuhr, Prescott, Proud (the historian of Pennsylvania), Ranke, Robertson, Smollett, Sismondi, Thiers.

Scholars and Philologists.—Adelung, Bentley, Buttman, Casaubon, Champollion, Crusius, Ebers, Eichhorn, Erasmus, Ernesti, Ewald, Facciolati, Gesenius, Griesbach, Grimm, Hermann, Heyne, Humboldt, Jebb, (Samuel) Johnson, (Sir William) Jones, De Lacy, Lepsius, Magliabecchi, Michaelis, Montfaucon, Max Müller, Parr, Porson, Rénan, Salmasius, Scaliger, Schlegel, Taine, Tischendorf, Villoison, Vossius, Wilkinson, Winckelmann.

Essayists.—Addison, De Quincey, Gifford, Jeffrey, Lamb, Mackenzie, Sainte-Beuve, Steele.

Novelists.—(Jane) Austen, Balzac, Bronté, Bulwer, Burney, Cooper, De Foe, Dickens, Dumas, (George) Eliot, Florian, Hawthorne, Hugo, (Charles Paul) de Kock, Manzoni, Mitford, Reade, Reid, Richardson, Richmond, (George) Sand, Scott, Madame de Staël, Sterne, Sue, Thackeray, Trollope, Zola.

Poets.—Akenside, Arnold, Beattie, Béranger, the Brownings, Bryant, Burns, Byron, Campbell, Chatterton, Coleridge, Cowper, Crabbe, Dryden, Foscolo, Gay, Gellert, Goethe, Goldoni, Goldsmith, Gray, Halleck, Hayley, Heine, Holmes, Hood, (Ben) Jonson, Keats, Keble, Klopstock, Körner, Longfellow, Lowell, Lytton, Milton, Montgomery, Moore, Mussel, Pellico, Poe, Pope, Prior, Procter, Pushkin, Rouget de Lisle, Rousseau, Schiller, Shelley, Southey, Swift, Tasso, Tennyson, Tieck, Voiture, Voss, Warton, White, Whittier, Wieland, Willis, Wordsworth, Young.

Dramatists.—Kotzebue, Laharpe, Palissot, Racine, Rowe, Sardou, Scarron, Scribe, Sheridan, Vulpius.

Actors.—The Booths, Boucicault, Cooke, Cushman, Fechter, Forrest, Garrick, Henderson, Irving, the Jeffersons, Kean, the Kembles, Knowles, Macready, Modjeska, Mur-

doch, Rachel, Ristori, Salvini, Siddons, Sothern, Talma, (Ellen) Terry, Wallack.

Singers.—Grisi, Lablache, Malibran, Mario, Nilsson, Patti, Rubini, Sontag.

Composers of Music and Musicians.—Abt, Auber, Balfe, Beethoven, Berlioz, (Ole) Bull, von Bülow, Carafa, Cherubini, Chopin, Czerny, Donizetti, Flotow, Gounod, Grétry, Halévy, Handel, Haydn, Hérold, Hummel, Kreutzer, Le Sueur, Liszt, Meyerbeer, Mozart, Offenbach, Paganini, Raff, Rossini, Rubenstein, Schumann, Spohn, Spontini, Thalberg, Thomas, Verdi, Wagner, von Weber, Zelter.

Architects.—Cockerell, Gerbier, Latrobe, Le Brun, Pugin, Rennie, Walter, Wren, Wyatt.

Sculptors.—Bartolini, Canova, Crawford, Flaxman, Gibson, Houdon, Nollekens, Oeser, Powers, Rauch, Rogers, Schwanthaler, Story, Thorwaldsen, Wyatt.

Painters and Designers.—Allan, Bonheur, Church, Copley, Cruikshank, Doré, Eastlake, Gérard, Gérôme, Greuze, Hamilton, Hasenclever, Healey, Isabey, Kauffman, Kaulbach, Kneller, Landseer, Lawrence, Le Brun, Leslie, Leutze, Overbeck, the Peales, Poussin, Read, Retzsch, Reynolds, Rigaud, Rosa, Rubens, Stuart, Sully, Turner, Vanloo, Vasari, Wappers, Wertmüller, West, Westall, Wilkie.

Engravers.—Bartolozzi, Desnoyers, Longhi, Müller, Revere, Sartain, Sharpe, Toschi, Townley, Wille.

The Beau Monde.—Brummell, Chesterfield, the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Hervey.

Of special interest to us, as members of this Historical Society of Pennsylvania, are autographs of the Presidents of the United States, of members of the Continental Congress, signers of the Declaration of Independence (all of whom are represented), the generals of the Continental army, and statesmen and soldiers of Great Britain and France, who were conspicuous in the War of the Revolution. The letters of Washington, Franklin, Lafayette, Jefferson, and Robert Morris are particularly numerous and valuable. There are peculiarly interesting letters of Lincoln and Grant, including the famous demand of the latter for

the unconditional surrender of Fort Donelson, and there is an extraordinary series of documents relating to the attempt of John Brown to incite insurrection in Virginia.

Besides the letters and shorter autographic writings comprised in the collection, there are several autograph books, as John F. Watson's "Annals of Philadelphia," and "Historical Incidents of Germantown," "The Journal of John Heckewelder," "Minute Book of General John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, of the American Army of the Revolution," "Log-Book of Elisha Kent Kane, M.D., kept during his Arctic Exploration," etc. Special mention should also be made of fifteen volumes, handsomely bound, of the correspondence of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, presented to Mr. Dreer by Mr. George W. Childs.

Such is a mere indication of the nature of the magnificent collection so generously bestowed on the Historical Society by Mr. Dreer. It has been topically arranged by him in cases made for the purpose, and a catalogue of it, comprising about one thousand pages, is in course of preparation, and already partly printed, which will, it is hoped, be quite completed in the fall.